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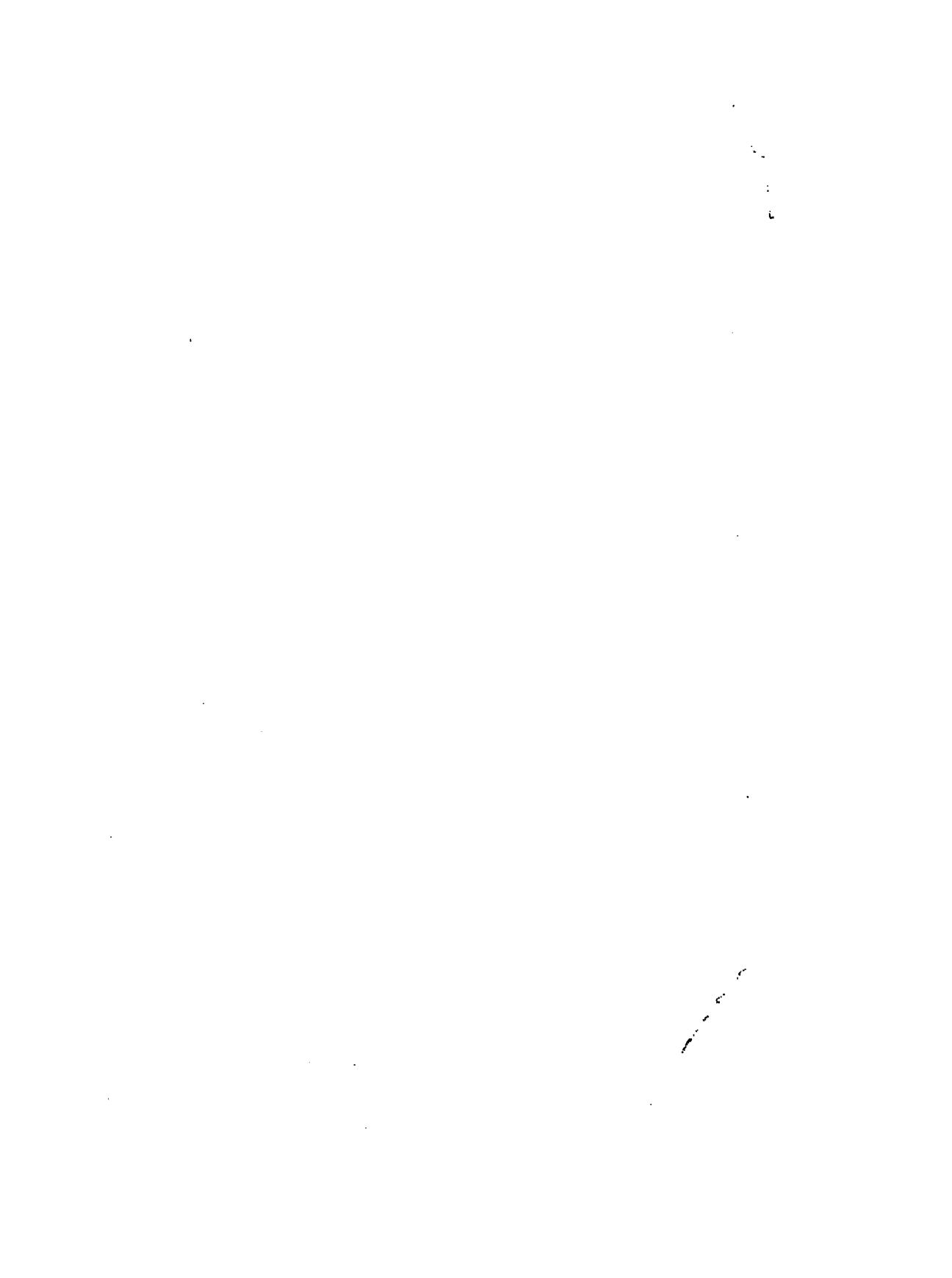
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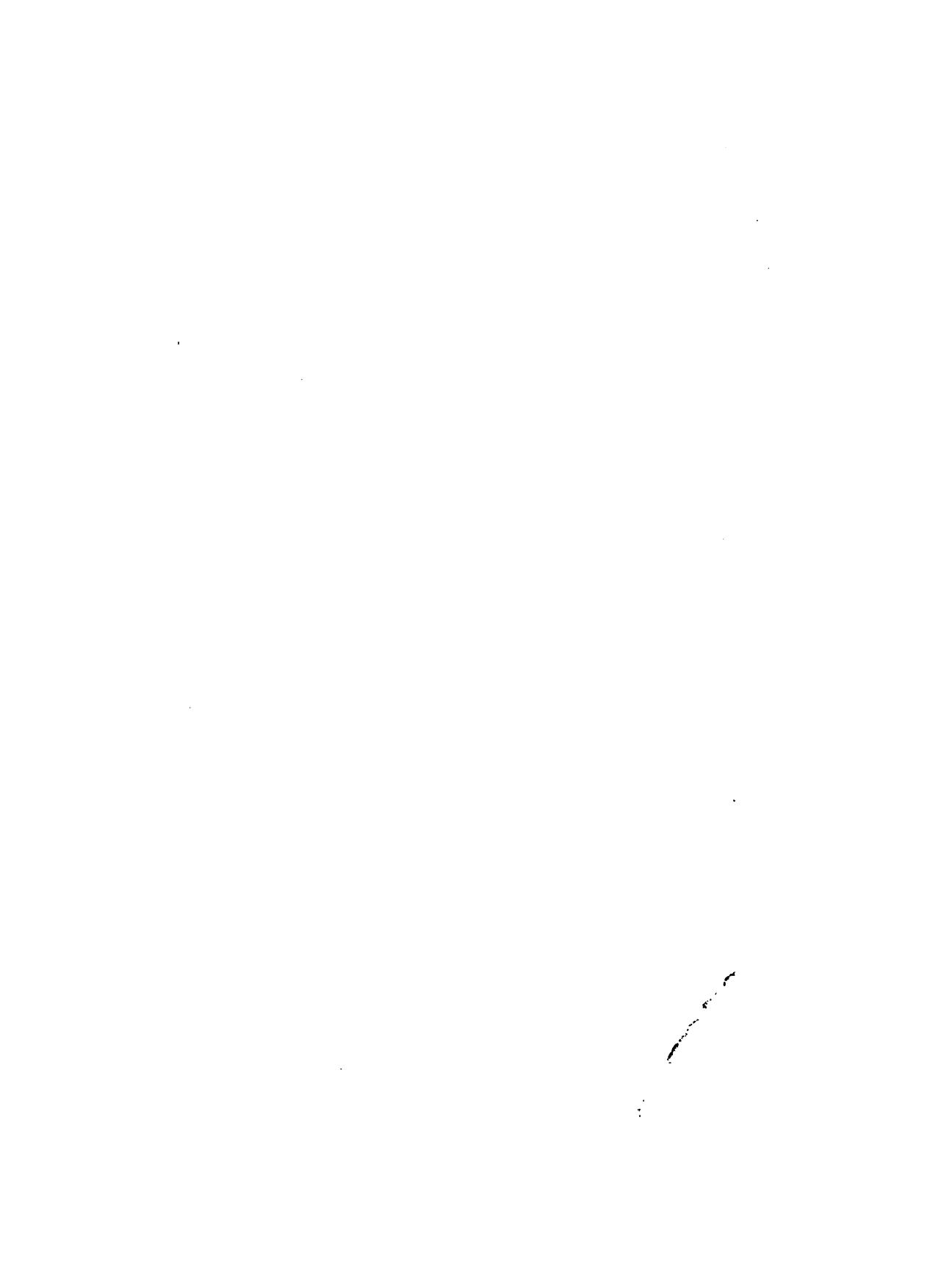
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TOLD TO THE LITTLE TOT





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By EDMUND VANCE COOKE

Rimes to be Read. Miscellaneous Verses.
Cloth, \$1.50

Chronicles of the Little Tot. Poems of Childhood.
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Told to the Little Tot. Stories for Children.
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The Story Book Boy



Told to the Little Tot

BY

EDMUND VANCE COOKE

Author of

"Chronicles of the Little Tot," "Rimes to be Read,"
"Impertinent Poems," etc.

Illustrated by

BESSIE COLLINS PEASE



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AUTHOR'S NOTE

As these stories of the Man Mite and his playmates have been told to the Little Tot, they have also been presented to the readers of the Woman's Home Companion, The Youths' Companion, The Delineator, The Golden Age and the papers of The Newspaper Enterprise Association.

To the publishers and editors of these, the writer extends his sincere thanks for the courtesy of re-printing in this volume.

E. V. C.

HOW MISS TABITHA CAT TAUGHT SCHOOL.



IN Maltese Street, in the city of Kittyopolis, there lived an elderly maiden cat who thought she would teach school. So she hung out a sign:

MISS TABITHA CAT
Mouse Kindergarten. Numbers a Specialty.

For a long time the many respectable mouse families of the neighborhood would have nothing to do with her, but one day she received a card bearing the name:

Mrs. Rodenta de House-Mouse

Pole-in-the-Wall No. 4

Attica Apartments

Miss Tabitha received Mrs. De House-

Mouse most amiably, although there was a suspicious licking of her lips whenever her visitor turned her head to look at the pictures on the walls, the famous "Niagara," by Grimalkin, done in pure cream, and the well-known cat's-eye view of Thomasville, which is considered a remarkable bit of moonlight photography.

"I have ten children, my dear Miss Cat," said the visitor, languidly, "and they give me a great deal of care."

"After a term with me," purred Miss Cat, softly, "I think I can assure you they will never trouble you again." (Now, what do you suppose she meant by that?)

"I am glad of that," responded Mrs. De House-Mouse, "for since Mr. De House-Mouse discovered his cheese mine, our cares of property are really enormous."



“ I shall be glad to relieve you of the children,” said Miss Cat. “ They are fat? I mean well-grown for their age? That is to say, pretty well-advanced?”

“ Oh, dear me, no,” answered Mrs. De House-Mouse. “ Their arithmetic is very, very poor. They cannot even count well enough to tell our neighbors how many more bread-scrapS we have than they. And as I frequently remark to poor, dear Mr. De House-Mouse, what *is* the use of accumulating bread-scrapS, unless you are aware of your vast superiority over your neighbors.

“ Numbers,” said Miss Cat, modestly, “ is my specialty. I have a new system which gives remarkable results.”

So the next morning the ten little De House-Mouses started to school with Miss Tabitha Cat. They were Whiskerando, White-Tooth, Bright-Eyes, Long-Tail, Soft-Foot, Fatness, Spryness, Cuteness, Sleekness and Blackieback.

10 Told to the Little Tot

Miss Cat's large green eyes fairly gleamed with delight to look at them.

"My dear children," she began, "your first day's lesson is in addition, sometimes known as 'disguised subtraction.' You, my dear Whiskerando, White-Tooth, Long-Tail, Bright-Eyes and Soft-Foot are in one class, and you, my sweet Fatness, Shyness, Cuteness, Sleekness and Blackieback are in another.

"You will observe that there are five in the first class and four in the second class."

"Please, teacher," said Blackieback, sitting up and counting his toes rapidly.



"Don't interrupt," said Miss Cat, sharply, and showing her teeth, "but listen to the lesson. Five in one class and four in the other are ten. Now how many are five and four?"

"Five and four are ten! Five and four are ten!" chimed the stupid mice, all but Blackieback.

“Blackieback must go into the closet and remain for the rest of the day,” said Miss Cat, severely. So poor Blackieback was put into the closet.

When the time came for school to let out, Miss Cat said, “Now, my dears, we always call the roll at dismissal, and we call it by numbers instead of names, so as to give you practice. First, how many came to school this morning?”

“Ten of us,” answered the little De House-Mouses.

“Very good,” said the teacher. “Now the first class will please call itself by numbers.”

“One!” said Whiskerando.

“Two!” said White-tooth.

“Three!” said Bright-eyes.

“Four!” said Long-tail.

“Five!” said Soft-foot.

“Now the second class,” said the teacher.

“One!” said Fatness.

12 Told to the Little Tot

“Two!” said Spryness.

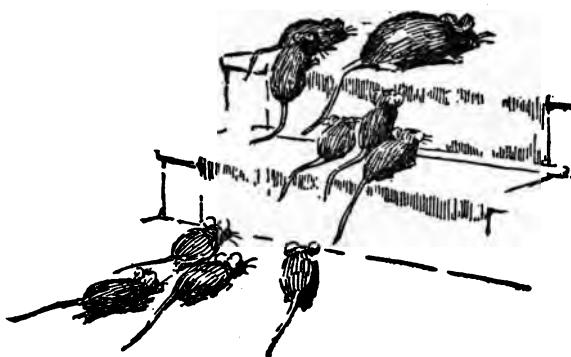
“Three!” said Cuteness.

“Four!” said Sleekness.

“Very good,” said the teacher. “Now, remember the lesson. How many are five and four?”

“Five and four are ten,” answered the children.

“Very good,” said Miss Tabby. “And I am relieved to find that none of you have strayed away during the day. Now run home, the entire ten of you.”



So the little ones ran home, but in a short time back they came again with Mrs. De House-Mouse at their head. “What do

you mean by keeping one of my children?" demanded the mother.

"Madam, what do *you* mean by accusing me of such a thing?" cried Miss Cat. "How many children did you send to me?"

"Ten, of course."

"Then ask your children if they did not count themselves at dismissal."

"Yes, ma'am, we counted ourselves," said the children eagerly.

"And how many left the school?" asked Miss Cat, with dignity.

"Ten," faltered the children.

"But my children have never been able to count up to ten," objected Mrs. De House-Mouse.

"Which shows," said Miss Cat, "what remarkable progress they make under my system, and I therefore hope you will continue to send them to my school."

The next day the nine children came, and

they were divided into classes of five and four, and the lesson was that five and three are nine, and Sleekness was put into the closet. And Miss Tabby again called the roll by numbers, and again convinced Mrs. De House-Mouse that nine children left school at dismissal.

And Mrs. De House-Mouse said it was very annoying, but she never did have any head for the higher mathematics.

And the third day the little De House-Mouses learned that four and three are eight, and Cuteness was put into the closet.

And the fourth day three and three were seven.

And the fifth day two and three were six.

And the sixth day two and two were five.

And the seventh day two and one were four.

And the eighth day one and one were three.

And meanwhile Fatness, Spryness, Soft-Foot, Long-Tail and Bright-Eyes had all gone into the closet.

The ninth day only Whiskerando and White-Tooth were left to go to school. Miss Tabby taught them that one and none are two, and promptly put White-Tooth into the closet for disputing it.

When the time came for dismissal, Miss Tabby smiled so broadly that it seemed as if her head would fall off, and asked Whiskerando how many were in his class.

“One,” answered Whiskerando, quickly.

“Very good. And how many are in the other class?”

“None,” answered Whiskerando, timidly.

“Very well answered,” said Miss Cat, “and you are a very bright scholar, Whiskerando. Now, remember our lesson. How many are one and none?”

“T-two,” faltered poor Whiskerando.

“Excellent!” cried Miss Cat. “Now the two of you may run home!”

“B-but, t-teacher,” stammered Whisker-

ando, "there aren't two of us to go home. There's only me, and that's one."

"Dear! dear!" said Miss Cat, licking her lips. "You are positively the stupidest pupil I ever had. The doors are all locked and the windows are all closed, and yet you dare to dispute me. Now, again, how many are one and none?"

"T-two," said Whiskerando, weakly.

"Well, then, if I should eat one of you, there would still be one remaining. And if, as you say, you are the only one, then the remaining one will be you, will it not?"

Then Whiskerando saw what the wicked Miss Cat had been plotting all along, and knew that he must use his wits if he would escape.

"Yes'm. But if you should eat me, by mistake, instead of the other one, then how could the other one go to tell my mother that you sent two of us home?"

“Ah, hum!” said the teacher. “Well, run along home, and tell your mother I sent two of you home, and be sure you come back bright and early to-morrow.”

She opened the door and Whiskerando slipped past her, and tipping his head on one side, said “Yes’m. And to-morrow you will teach me that none and none are one, won’t you, ma’am?” and whisked away.

“Dear me!” said Miss Cat. “I do believe that little wretch was making fun of me. I feel pretty sure he intends never to come back. Well, well,” she purred, sticking out her long, pink tongue and smiling horribly, “I still have his nine brothers and sisters in the closet, and as I feel horribly hungry, I think I’ll begin on them right now.”

She went to the closet, opened the door a wee speck, and called, “White-Tooth, Fatness, Bright-Eyes, Spryness, Long-Tail, Cuteness, Soft-Foot, Sleekness, Blackieback!”

But there was no answer.



She opened the door very cautiously a little more, and a little more, and then threw it wide open, but all she saw was a hole in one corner and a note at the edge of it addressed to herself in mouse-track writing.

In great haste she opened the note and read:

Dear Teacher of Numbers,
Nine from nine leaves how many?
Your Loving Pupils.

This made Miss Tabitha Cat so cross that she went out and took in her sign.

THE STORY-BOOK BOY.



KNOW a little boy who lives in the story books. I do not mean that his home is really between the covers of "Mother Goose" or "Jack, the Giant-Killer," you know, but everything that happens to him in his little life reminds him of something which happened in the story books.

Why, when his papa took him to the circus, the story-book boy wouldn't go in to see the ring performance at all, but spent all of his time before the cage of the timber-wolf trying to get him to tell his side of the Red Riding Hood story.

And one day, late in the afternoon, he and his sister went to the spring to get some water and he heard a queer noise. I'm very sure you have heard the same sound many times, and so had the story-book boy, but he insisted that it

was the fairy god-mother calling “Cinderella!”
“Cinderella!”

“Goosie!” said his sister.

“It isn’t a goose,” insisted the story-book boy, and, for that matter, it wasn’t, for after he had looked around very carefully, he found a strange little creature which looked no more like a goose than like a fairy god-mother.

“See the little, shiny black eyes!” exclaimed the story-book boy; “they’re just like the god-mother’s.”

“Where’s her nice clothes and her crown?” demanded his sister.
“Where’s her wand to touch the pumpkin with?”

“How should I know?” answered her brother. “And anyway, we havn’t any pumpkin to touch, have we? Oh, maybe she’s changed her clothes. See! she’s got on



a green coat and a white vest. Maybe it's the god-father."

"Help me carry this bucket," said his sister.
"You know well enough it's only a frog."

Perhaps the funniest of all the story-book boy's mistakes happened the time he went to St. Louis to visit his grandmother, or rather the time he came back from St. Louis. Of course he had to go on the railroad cars, and when his grandmother took him down to the big station, the story-book boy insisted that it was the Castle of the Sleeping Beauty.

He pretended to be very much surprised when they passed through the big entrance without any trouble, but was quite triumphant again when he pointed out the great iron fence and gates which guard the entrances to trains. "It's the hedge!" he exclaimed. "They've built up those stone gates just to fool the prince, but this is the real place to get in right here. There! don't you hear the dragons snorting?"

They're to eat the prince up before he gets a chance to kiss the Sleeping Beauty, if he should happen to get through the hedge."

"Why, boy," said his grandmother, "those aren't dragons. Those are engines."

"Engines! Why, grandma, you know there weren't any engines in the Enchanted Castle."

His grandmother laughed and they sat down to wait till their train would be called. Presently the story-book boy tugged at his grandmother in great excitement. "Grandma! grandma! we're *in* the castle. We must have got in the back way and the dragons are mad and that's what they're snorting about."

"Why, what makes you think that?" asked his puzzled grandmother.

"'Cause there's the Sleeping Beauty!" cried the story-book boy, pointing to a lady fast asleep in one of the seats. "Why doesn't anybody see her?" he asked. "Do you sup-

pose she's got her invisible cloak on, or are all these other folks here dead folks? Oh, grandma, I just thought of something."

"Mercy on us! do keep quiet!" said his grandmother, fidgeting. But the story-book boy slipped from her side, ran over to the dozing lady and gave her a resounding kiss. The lady straightened up, opened her eyes and stared at him in surprise. "Why, who are you?" she gasped, only half awake.

"I'm the prince," said the story-book boy, solemnly, "and it's lucky for you I came along, 'cause these dead folks here can't see you. Only, please, if it's just the same to you, I don't want to marry you, 'cause I'm engaged to my mamma and I'm going home to see her this morning."

MAMMA-GIRL AND THE BABY-DOLLIE



HERE was once a little girl who had a house of her own, and who had four children. They were a wax-dolly, a china-dolly, a wooden-dolly and a sugar-dolly, and it puzzled her very much to know which of her babies loved her the most.

One day she thought of a way to find out. She was going out to spend the afternoon, so she called the dollies together and asked them which loved her the best.

The wax-dolly blinked her eyes (she was very fond of blinking her eyes, as she was the only one of the doll family that could do it) and said: "I love you most, because my head is softest."

The china-dolly simpered. She was always simpering, because her face was made that way. "I love you most, because my face is brightest."



The wooden-dolly grinned and growled. "I love you most, because my head is hardest."

But the sugar-dolly looked round-eyed and sober (her face being only painted on) and said: "I love you most, because my heart is sweetest." And that was a joke!

"Very well," said the little girl, "I'm glad that each of you loves me the best, because I am going out this afternoon and the one who loves me best must be the best-behaved."

So the little girl went out and left the dollies to keep house.

It was not very long before the china-

dolly said: "I'm going out in the yard and walk on the fence."

"You're afraid," jeered the wax-dolly. "Mamma-girl won't like it."

"You dassent," growled the wooden-dolly. "Mamma-girl says you mustn't."

"You shouldn't," said the sugar-dolly. "Mamma-girl is afraid we'll hurt ourselves if we walk on fences."

But the china-dolly went out to walk on the fence and fell off and broke her ankle.

"Oh, oh, oh!" she screamed.

"Serves you right!" laughed the wax-dolly.

"I told you so," howled the wooden-dolly.

"Oh, my poor china sister!" cried the sugar-dolly, and went out to help her in.

"I can't walk," sobbed the china-dolly.

"I tell you what to do," said the sugar-

dolly. "Just take a bite out of my ankle and it will make yours well."

Now, perhaps that seems like a very strange kind of a medicine, but if you will remember how many times you have bumped yourself and have had the pain all taken away by eating a piece of candy or a lump of sugar, I am sure you will see what a wise dolly the sugar-dolly was.

So the china-dolly took a sugar-bite out of sister's ankle and, sure enough, her own grew quite strong again.

The china-dolly hadn't much more than recovered, before the wooden-dolly said, "I'm going down cellar."

"Uh! uh!" said the wax-dolly, "you'll get a spanking if you do."

"I wouldn't," said the sugar-dolly, "mamma-girl is afraid we'll fall off the steps onto the cement floor."

But the wooden-dolly went down and

fell over the side of the steps and splintered his arm.

“Ow, ow!” he howled.

“He! he! serves you right!” said the wax-dolly.

“Now, Mr. Smarty, that’s what you get for laughing at me when I broke myself,” said the china-dolly.

But the sugar-dolly said: “Oh, poor little wooden brother,” and helped him upstairs.

“My arm is bent at the elbow!” bawled the wooden-dolly.

“Never mind; take a bite of my arm and make it well,” said the sugar-dolly. And, sure enough, a single bite made the wooden-dolly’s arm quite stiff again, as a wooden-dolly’s ought to be.

“Oh, dear, I’m getting hungry. I’m going to make some fudges,” announced the wax-dolly.



30 Told to the Little Tot

“But would mamma-girl like us to light the gas stove?” asked the sugar-dolly.

“Don’t know and don’t care,” said the wax-dolly, blinking her eyes. “Here goes for fudges.”

But, alas! in bending over to light the gas, her beautiful hair caught fire.

“Serves you right! serves you right!” cried the china-dolly and the wooden-dolly together. “That’s what *you* told *us*.”

“Oh, she’ll melt!” screamed the sugar-dolly, in alarm, and running to her waxen sister, she smothered the flames and turned off the gas.

“Oo, oo, oo! My nice *real* hair!” blubbered the wax-dolly.

“It’s too bad,” answered the sugar-dolly, “but you lick my chocolate hair and it may make yours grow out again.”

So the wax-dolly nibbled off all the chocolate hair of the sugar-dolly, and her own grew on longer than ever.

By this time it was past their supper hour and mamma-girl had not returned. All the dollies became very hungry, and at last the sugar-dolly proposed that they get the supper themselves. "I can't carry dishes, because I chipped my leg," said the china-dolly.

"I can't bring anything out of the cellar, because I'm afraid to go down again," said the wooden-dolly.

"I can't cook anything for fear I'd burn myself," said the wax-dolly.

So the sugar-dolly had it all to do herself, and just as she had the supper all ready, who should come in but mamma-girl.

"My poor, little dolly-babies, how have you been getting along?" asked mamma-girl.

"I chipped my leg," "I splintered my arm," "I burnt my real hair," cried the

china-dolly, the wooden-dolly and the wax-dolly.

“But how?” asked mamma-girl.

“She was walking on the fence!” said the wooden-dolly.

“He went down cellar!” said the china-dolly.

“She was playing with the fire!” said the wooden-dolly.

“But you seem all right!” exclaimed mamma-girl.

“Yes’m. We ate the sugar-dolly and got well,” bawled the three.

“Oh, my poor sugar-baby,” said mamma-girl. “And who got the supper?”

“I couldn’t carry dishes with my chipped leg,” said the china-dolly.

“I was afraid to go down cellar again for the things,” said the wooden-dolly.

“I was afraid I’d melt myself if I did any cooking,” said the wax-dolly.

“Ah!” said mamma-girl, “I think I see.”

Then she gave the three some bread and milk and sent them to bed. Then she melted some sugar and mended the sugar-dolly’s ankle and arm and hair, where the others had eaten her. Then she and sugar-dolly sat down and had supper together, fruit and cream and cake and other goodies.

Now, that is the way that mamma-girl found out which dolly loved her best. And it wasn’t the wax-dolly who blinked her eyes, or the china-dolly who simpered, or the wooden-dolly who grinned and growled. Which one do you think it was?





THREE BOTTLES OF WHISTLE



LITTLE Sam Hill had an older brother, Tom, who was a whistler in a vaudeville show. His brother's name was Signor Tomtomasso del Montabellissimo, the Human Flute, but little Sam's name was just Sam Hill and he couldn't whistle a note.

When Sam was born, a fairy from Fayetteville (Ark.) appeared to his mother and offered her any gift she might wish for the new baby, and his mother, being very angry with his elder brother for having become a vaudevillian, when he might have been a milkman and driven his own red wagon, hastily wished that Sam might never whistle a note.

"Very well," said the



fairy and went out through the key-hole. The next day she came with three bottles labelled "Condensed Pucker," "Essence of the Wind" and "Liquefied Sound." "Take care of these," said the fairy, "they contain your son's whistling powers."

Now when the time came for Sam to make his fortune, he entered the profession of milkman, and was a very good milkman indeed. His red wagon, his white cream and his blue milk formed so delightful a combination that he was everywhere known as "Bunko Hill, the patriotic milkman." About this time a terrible war broke out between the President of the United States and the King of the North Pole over the very important question as to whether the Chinese should be required to eat snowballs or cotton-bolls. To be sure the Chinese went right on eating rice the same as ever, but that didn't stop the war. Of course Sammy enlisted and he made a very



good soldier, too, only he would insist on getting up at two o'clock in the morning instead of waiting for reveille.

The King of the North Pole had invaded the United States with an army of two million polar bears, and the circuses and zöological gardens clamored loudly for protection. The bears had landed on the coast very hungry and very thirsty and threatened to eat up everything between Eastport and San Diego.

The General of the American Army was very much alarmed. He looked over all of his text-books and histories, but there were no details of a plan of campaign against polar bears. "We are lost!" he cried.

"Don't cry," said Sammy, "I will find us."

"You'll what?" asked the General.

"I mean," answered Sammy, "that I will

save our beloved country and its circuses."

"You!" said the general. "What can you do?"

"You forget that I am a milkman," said Sammy.

The next morning Sammy got into his red wagon and delivered milk to all the Polar army, and shortly afterwards the Americans fell upon them, bound every one of them and

delivered them to the circuses, for they were all curled up like dead caterpillars and could not offer the least resistance. The secret of it was that Sammy had placed a few drops of "Condensed Pucker" into every can of milk instead of the usual formaldehyde.



The Polar Army was captured, but the King of the North Pole was angrier than ever. He ordered out his entire naval force, consisting of five million seven hundred and twenty-nine thousand four hundred and fifty-two icebergs and a dismantled whaling ship, and started the entire fleet toward the United States.

As the fleet neared America, it made the weather so cold that the cream froze in the sailors' coffee. Sammy was sorry he was out of business and was missing the chance to charge his customers for ice cream. For Sammy had now joined the navy, and he made a very good sailor, too, except for his bad habit of grumbling that the sea was too blue. He said it was an outrage upon the consumer to deliver any liquid as blue as that.

The American Admiral could find no way to fight the Polar Navy. The people were in great distress, the soda water fountains were

closed, the Ice Trust made an assignment and the cold storage plants were burned for fuel. The admiral was about to strike his colors when Sammy interfered. "I cannot allow it, Admiral," he sobbed; "that red is the red of our patriots' blood, that white the white of our country's purity, that blue the blue of my milk. Allow me to save them."

"How!" asked the Admiral.

"Load your next shell with this bottle," said Sammy, producing his "Essence of the Wind," "and fire it point blank at the enemy." If you will remember what a tremendous amount of wind a whistling boy blows in the course of his life, you will understand that when it was all condensed into one blast the Polar fleet was blown clear into the desert of Sahara, which was covered that summer with a fine growth of Iceland moss.

When the time came to celebrate these victories, the President, the General and the

Admiral were in the reviewing stand, and the hearts of the people were bursting with suppressed enthusiasm. True, they had bands and megaphones and steam whistles and calliopes and even a bevy of boys with fish horns, but, as the President said in his speech. "What we long for is one shriek of victory to sound from ocean to ocean, but that, alas ! we cannot have."

"Yes, we can," shouted Sammy from the crowd.

"Who's interrupting me ?" demanded the President.

"Your Excellency," said the General, "it is the audacious youth who dared to offer ME advice in the hour of my victory."

"Your Worship," said the Admiral, "it is the young upstart who also interrupted ME just as I had perfected plans to sweep the enemy from my seas."

"Ah, ha!" said the President, "this, then,

is our chance to punish his impertinent habit of interfering. Come forward, young man, and make good your boast."

So Sammy stepped to the platform and opened his bottle of "Liquefied Sound," which gave forth "The Red, White and Blue" in such a blast that it was heard clear up at the North Pole, which so impressed the King that he sent a special courier to beg for a cotton-boll which he promised to eat in token of his allegiance.

As for the Americans, they were so delighted that they elected Sammy president on the Prohibition ticket, after which he became so prosperous that he had his wagon newly painted every spring and acquired the habit of lying in bed until half past four every morning.

TRIXY AND THE TICK-TICK.



FOR a birth-day present, Trixy's papa gave her a watch, a watch of her very own which would tell time at any hour of the day, had a second-hand and could be wound up by turning the little burr on the stem towards the right.

Trix knew this was so, because she wound it as often as possible and also told everybody the time upon the smallest excuse. "Mama," she would say, "let me time the bread for Henrata. She put it in at twenty minutes and twenty seconds to two, and now it's ten, eleven, twelve minutes and twenty, twenty-two, twenty-four seconds past two; no, it's twenty-eight seconds. When must she take it out by my watch, mama?"

Or she would say "Papa, my watch can whisper to me. When I put it up to my ear, it says 'Trix, Trix, Trix, Trix,' just as if it were in a hurry to tell me something. What is it trying to say, papa?"

But papa couldn't tell her, so the little girl got into the habit of holding the watch to her ear at all hours of the day, trying to understand its language. She even took it to bed with her at night. Deep down under her pillow she heard it saying "Thick-thick-thick-thick, thick-thick-thick-thick," until she took it from under the pillow, when she understood it to say "Thank-you, Trix, thank-you, Trix," very clearly.

"How funny," said Trix, "that even my watch likes some things and doesn't like others. Which do you like the better, little watch, the pillow or the mattress?"

"Tick-tick-tick-tick, tick-tick-tick-tick."



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Trixxy and the Tick Tick

was in a hurry to go to town and it really seemed very saucy in his little girl to answer him in a way which sounded senseless to his ears.

“Stick-stick-stick-stick, stick-stick-stick-stick!” cried the little girl, in surprise and alarm.

Her father was now so put out at what he thought was her disobedience that he hardly spoke to her again before leaving, but as he kissed her good-bye, he said: “Now I hope that by the time I get home my Trixy won’t talk like a little lunatic any more.”

“Lun’tic - tic - tic, lun’tic - tic - tic,” answered the little girl, and her father went away almost angrily.

When she went to school, her teacher asked her: “Do you know your lesson in arithmetic?”



“ ‘Rith-me-tic-tic, ‘rith-me-tic-tic,’ ” answered Trixy and thought she had answered very intelligently.

“ How many are six times six? ” asked her teacher.

“ Ticks tick ticks tick ticky ticks, ” said Trixy promptly, supposing she had said “ Six times six are thirty-six.”

“ Look here, Beatrice, ” said her teacher, “ this isn’t like you at all. Are you playing me a trick? ”

“ No trick-trick-trick, no trick-trick-trick, ” sobbed the little girl, for she begun to fear nobody would ever understand her again.

“ It *is* a trick and a mean trick, too, and I shall have to call you ‘Tricky Trixy’ if you keep it up, ” said her teacher.

The little girl could only repeat “ Tricky Trixy, tricky Trixy! ” and sat silent the rest of the school session.

She was so glad when school was out

for the day that she ran home singing a little squirrel-song she knew, and which runs:

“If you want to catch me,
Learn to climb a tree,
Up the hickory, down the hickory,
Up the hickory-tree!”

But as she came into the house all her mother heard was:

“Tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick,
Tick-tick-tick-tick-tee,
Tick-te-tickery, tick-te-tickery,
Tick-te-tickery-tee!”

“Haven’t you got over that yet, little chick,” asked her mama, who frequently called her “Little chick” as a pet name. She was sorry she had done so this time, for the little girl answered, “Chick-chick, chick, chick-chick, chick, chick-chick?” and

was sure she had said "Haven't got over what, mamma?"

A little later her papa came home and she ran to meet him. Her papa picked her up in his arms and cried, "How's my little brick by this time?" for that was one of his funny names for her.

Brick-brick-brick-brick, brick-brick-brick-brick!" said Trixy gleefully, and then her papa set her down and said, mocking her, "Lick-lick-lick-lick, lick-lick-lick-lick! didn't papa tell you he'd have to punish you if you didn't stop that foolishness?"

Poor Trixy had all she could do to keep from crying. She didn't know why her papa was angry at her, for she didn't know that she no longer talked like a little girl.

"What do you suppose ails her?" asked her papa of her mama.

"I've been trying to think all day,"

answered her mama, and I think it must be that watch."

"Where *is* her watch?" asked papa.
"I haven't seen it to-day."

"I haven't either," said mama.

"Tick, tick-tick, tick-tick," added poor Trixy, meaning to say "I haven't either."

"Well," said her papa, "I'll take her over to the doctor's."

The doctor looked at her tongue, felt of her pulse, put his hand on her brow and put a little glass tube into her mouth. "I don't see anything the matter with her," he said. "What *is* it, Trixy?"

"Tick-tick-tick-tick," answered Trixy.
"Huh?" exclaimed the doctor.
"Tick-tick-tick-tick," repeated Trixy.
"What *is* the matter with the child?" demanded the doctor.

"That's it," responded her papa. "She's told you exactly. It's tick-tick-tick-tick."

“ My goodness ! you don’t want me, then,” said the doctor. “ Take her to a watch-maker and let him look at her inside works.”

But instead, her papa took her home and put her to bed. As she lay there, after the house had quieted down for the night, she thought she heard her watch going “ Tick-tick-tick-tick ! ” very faint and slow, as if it were sleepy.

Trixie was sleepy too, but she felt under her pillow and around the bed, but couldn’t find her watch. She repeated to herself “ Tick-tick-tick-tick ! ” and went to sleep. When she awoke in the morning, she happened to look under the bed, and there was her watch. She seized it and ran to her papa, crying “ Papa, papa, here’s my watch, and it’s tick-tick is all run down.”

“ And *your* tick-tick has run down, too,” said her papa, “ and you talk like your papa’s

Told to the Little Tot 53

little girl again!"



DOWN THE KING'S CHIMNEY.



NE summer the Man Mite went out to visit his grandmother, who lived on a farm. Every little boy ought to have at least one grandfather, or one grandmother, who lives on a farm. The Man Mite's grandmother thought a great deal of him and he thought a great deal of his grandmother—and of his grandmother's farm.

He liked the horses and the cows and the meadows and the barn and the pond and the woods and the orchard and the spring-house. He was especially fond of the spring-house, for it was cool and restful on hot summer days, and his grandmother used to let him take his fairy-book and sit there as long as he liked.

One day he heard his grandmother say



that she wished she had some "herbs and simples" to make some medicine. Without saying anything to her about it and without knowing very clearly what "herbs and simples" were, he started out to get some for her. On the way he passed the spring-house and looked in just for a minute to look at the pictures of the gnomes and nixies in his book. He didn't quite remember how far he had got in the book when he put it down and went to the woods, but presently he found himself gathering the "herbs and simples." He had had no idea before how many things grew in the fields and woods. He found a great many curious little flowers and shrubs and grasses and berries, but very few hart-leaves, and he remembered that his grandmother had mentioned hart-leaves particularly.

As you know, hart-leaves love to grow around old logs and stumps, so the Man Mite kept a sharp lookout for these. He was sure he had walked a long, long way, and was beginning to feel tired. Indeed, he remembered now that he had felt tired even when he went into the spring-house. He had a good mind to turn back when, right ahead of him, he saw a rotten stump with hart-leaves and hart-leaves and hart-leaves growing at the bottom.

The Man Mite gave a shout of joy and ran towards it as fast as he could. He ran so fast that he took a jump into the stump to stop himself, but, much to his surprise, he didn't stop. Instead of stopping, he fell right through, down, down, down, until bump! he found himself in the fire-place of an underground room. Luckily it was summer and there was no fire in the fire-place, but before he had time to pick

himself up, a little, old man came running towards him. Though old, he wasn't so tall as the Man Mite himself, but on the forefinger of his right hand there grew a nail fully a foot long and with its edge sharpened so that it was almost like a sword. On the other hand grew an equally long nail, hollowed at the end like a spoon.

“What do you mean by jumping down the chimney of the king's kitchen?” screamed the dwarf, pointing his finger at the Man Mite.

“Oh, I didn't mean to. Please don't stab me!” cried the Man Mite.

“Stab you!” answered the dwarf. “I am the chief cook of the king. I do not pollute the king's bread-knife.”

The Man Mite scrambled out of the fire-place and started to brush himself off. “Stop that! stop that!” screamed another



little, old man, with a long, stiff beard, so long that it dragged on the floor. Not only did it drag on the floor, but he dragged it on the floor, using it as a sort of a broom with which to sweep.

“Couldn’t you brush me off, too?” asked the Man Mite.

“Brush *you* off!” said the old man scornfully. “I am the keeper of the king’s floors. I do not pollute the king’s broom.”

“Hurry, Wierdbeard,” said the first dwarf. “It is almost time for the king’s dinner.”

“Yes, Slimjim,” answered the other, “let us light up and summon the king’s table.

Suddenly the room was lit with a countless number of lightning-bugs and glow worms which shed a soft light all about the place. As soon as they flashed forth, a half dozen little men came running in. They were very thin, but had very broad backs and long

arms and haunches, which the Man Mite noticed as they squatted down on their hands and knees all in a row. "We are the king's table," they said.

"Where's Rolopoly?" asked Slimjim, just as a very fat dwarf came running in and lay down on his back at one end of the table, saying "I am the king's cushion."

It was all very curious to the Man Mite, and just at this juncture he heard somebody outside crying "I don't want to be washed! I don't want to be washed!"

"The king! the king!" cried Slimjim and Wierdbeard, bowing their heads to the ground as a little boy entered, just about the size of the Man Mite. Backing in before him came a dwarf with enormous hands, in which he held water. After him followed



another dwarf with long, white hair which hung down his back in a wavy mass.

“Will his majesty deign to dip his beneficent face into his majesty’s basin, Wholebowl, and dry his imperial features on his servant Bigwig?”

“Oh, bother!” said the little boy. “Why, who is this? My name is Rex. What’s yours?”

Before the Man Mite could answer, Wierdbeard spoke. “This, your majesty, is a prisoner guilty of house-breaking, burglary, obtaining entrance to the king’s palace under false pretences and impersonating Santy Claus.”

“I never did,” denied the Man Mite.

“Didn’t you break the king’s chimney?” demanded Wierdbeard, “and isn’t a chimney part of a house, so aren’t you a house-breaker? Isn’t house-breaking burglary?”



Didn't you come down the chimney as if you were Santy Claus and *are* you Santy Claus? Isn't that falsely impersonating Santy Claus, and if you pretended you were Santy Claus, isn't that obtaining entrance under false pretences?"

"Oh, bother!" said the king. "Say, do you like raspberry jam? I do."

"Will your majesty deign to occupy your majesty's cushion?" asked Rolopoly.

"Yes, thank you, I'll deign," answered the king, as another dwarf bobbed up from somewhere, having a left hand as large as a platter, while his right hand was very small. "Hello, Platewait," said the king.

"Good appetite to your majesty. Will your majesty have bivalves, shell-fish or mollusks?"

"I'll have some oysters," answered the king.

Platewait went over and whispered to

Slimjim, returning immediately with the announcement, "Very sorry, your majesty, but we are out of lemons and it is impossible to serve the oysters without them."

"I've got some sour-grass I found in the meadow," said the Man Mite. "Won't that do?"

"Oh, do you like sour-grass? So do I," said the king.

"It will not do at all," said Platewait hastily. "Will your gracious highness have the goodness to choose his second course, *eau de consomme* or *bouillon aqua pura?*"

"Say, is your name Gracious Goodness?" asked the Man Mite. "You said it was Rex."

Platewait went over to Slimjim, and presently returned, saying: "Very sorry, your majesty, but the soup is spoiled because the cook has no savory."

64 Told to the Little Tot

“I’ve got some catnip I picked in the field,” said the Man Mite.

“Oh, do you like catnip?” asked the king. “Have you ever tried to smoke it? I did once.”

“Impossible,” said Slimjim, shaking his long knife-finger at the Man Mite behind the king’s back.

“Will your majesty condescend to choose his third course, pollywog *au naturel*, or wigglers *a la rain-barrel*, or shredded shad.”

“I’ll take some fish,” said the king.

Platewait went over to Slimjim and returned. “Very sorry, your majesty, but the chef says the fish cannot be served without drawn butter sauce and we have no butter.”

“I’ve got a cup of butter; I mean a butter-cup,” said the Man Mite.

“Just the thing,” said the king.

“Your majesty’s chef is too much of an artist to use substitutes,” said Wierdbeard.

“If he is an artist, why doesn’t he draw the butter?” asked the Man Mite.

“Will your majesty be kind enough to order his fourth course?” interrupted Platewait; “old lamb, new sheep, or middle-aged mutton?”

“I’ll take some meat,” said the king.

Again Platewait went over to Slimjim and returned. “Very sorry, my liege, but the meat cannot be served without mint sauce and—”

“I’ve got some mint,” interrupted the Man Mite. “I picked it by the brook.”

“And,” continued Platewait, while Wierdbeard and Slimjim threatened the Man Mite behind the king’s back, “your majesty’s mint has ceased coining for the present. Will your majesty have fowl *a la barnyard* or chicken *comme il hencoop?*”

“Chicken!” shouted his majesty.

Platewait and Slimjim consulted as usual.

“Very sorry, your majesty, but we have no dressing for the chicken.”

“I’ve got some chick-weed,” said the Man Mite.

The king started to say something, but Platewait put in, “Will your majesty partake of the vegetable salad?”

“Yes, indeed,” said the king.

Platewait came back with his usual excuse. “Very sorry, your majesty, but the pepper is out, and the salad is not fit to eat without pepper.”

“I’ve got some pepper-grass,” said the Man Mite.

“Your majesty,” shrieked Slimjim, “this prisoner is altogether too smart. He—”

“I’ve got some smart-weed,” faltered the Man Mite.

Wierdbeard now ran up and brushed

imaginary crumbs off the king's table, while Platewait asked, "Will your majesty order his dessert?"

"But I'm hungry," said the king. "I've had nothing to eat. At least bring me some bread and milk."

"Very sorry," began Platewait, "but the milk—"

"I've got some milk-weed," interrupted the Man Mite.

"Give it to me," said the king. "I'm so hungry I could eat a lion."

"I've got a dandy lion," answered the Man Mite.

"Oh, oh! oh!" cried Platewait, "before your majesty receives his dessert, I pray you let the prisoner receive his deserts."

"Put him in the cooler," commanded the king, and then asked, "Do you like coolers?"

"Your majesty!" cried the flat-backed

dwarfs who composed the king's table, "we regret to leave you before dessert, but we are also your majesty's patrol wagon."

"Oh, bother!" said the king.

Then the Man Mite was placed on the backs of the dwarfs, and they darted away through caverns and corridors, into black holes and up steep underground precipices, until they came at last to a strange circular thing which looked like a tower.

"Open, Floordoor!" cried the patrol, and a little, old man stepped out of a niche at the bottom of the tower, into which he fitted like a brick in a wall. Out of the hole thus made a stream of water gushed, but the dwarfs seized the Man Mite and thrust him in head first, after which Floordoor stepped into place again, or at least the Man Mite so judged.

The Man Mite found himself struggling at the bottom of a well of icy water which



choked his ears and nose and mouth. "No wonder the king called it the cooler," he thought gaspingly, if one may be said to gasp in thought.

Though he fully expected to drown, the Man Mite struck out bravely, and presently he felt himself going up, up, up.

The further he went, the faster he went, and presently he was hurled into the air, just as he had seen a man shot from a cannon in the circus.

Then he came bump against something hard and he opened his eyes, for of course he had closed them while in the water. He opened his eyes, and where do you think he found himself? On the floor in the spring-house by the side of the very bench where his fairy-book lay!

"Dear me!" said the Man Mite, "to think that the king's underground palace

70 , Told to the Little Tot

reaches all the way from the woods to the spring-house!"

He ran to the house and told his grandmother, who was very much interested. When he had finished she felt of his jacket and remarked that it wasn't even damp.

THE SNOW MAN AND HIS BABY.



NE morning when the Man Mite ran to the window as usual, he was delighted to find that all out-doors was covered with snow.

“Oh, papa,” said he, “the world looks just like a cream pie before mama puts it in the oven. May I go out to see how it tastes?”

“Yes, if you put on your rubber boots,” answered papa.

“Why, papa,” laughed the Man Mite, “I don’t have to put on rubber boots to see how cream pie tastes.”

But after breakfast he was glad enough to go out to play in the snow with his sister. It was rather a wet snow, and by this time the



sun was shining warmly, so that the snow packed beautifully. "Let's make a Snow Man," said the Man Mite.

"Do you know how?" asked sister.

The Man Mite took a double handful of snow and packed it, then put it on the ground and rolled it and rolled it and turned it and turned it and flopped it and flopped it. Of course, every time he turned it, more and more snow clung to it, and soon it got so large it was as much as he and his sister could do to push it.

With one long, strong lift they turned it up on its end, down at the foot of the garden where a flower-bed had been in the summer.

Then they made another snow-ball almost as big as the first. "This is his body," said the Man Mite, "and we've got to put it on top of the other."

"We're not big enough to lift it," said

sister. "I'm afraid the old Snow Man will never get done."

"I know what to do," said the Man Mite, and he ran and got the teeter-totter board that they had used all summer. Putting one end on top of the larger snowball, they succeeded in pushing and sliding the other one up the inclined board until they had the smaller ball on top of the other.

Then they made a still smaller ball for his head, which they got into place the same way.

"He ought to have eyes," said sister, "coal black eyes." So she ran and got two lumps of coal and put them into his head for eyes, while the Man Mite found a big red apple and stuck it on for a nose.

"Now a mouth," said the Man Mite, "or he can't talk."

"Don't let's make him a mouth," said sister, "I don't want him to talk."

"Oh, boh!" said the Man Mite, and he made a very fierce mouth by sticking pecan nuts along in a row so that they looked like teeth.

By this time the sun had clouded and they had played a long time, so they went into the house feeling rather cold and damp.

The Man Mite was restless that night, and for a long time he couldn't sleep. Just as he was about to settle down, he thought he heard a strange voice calling him, a voice which spoke words but sounded something like the moo of a cow. "I'm lonesome," it said. "Come out here! You made me and you've got to play with me. I'm lonesome."

"Whatever can it be?" said the Man Mite. He looked around his room. The moon shone through the window and he could see quite plainly. There was no one

in his room. He tip-toed into the hall and to all the other bed-rooms, but everybody was asleep, yet no sooner had he snuggled down in bed again than once more came the cry: "I'm lonesome. Come out here! You made me and you've got to play with me. I'm lonesome."

This time the Man Mite ran to the window and looked out. There, in the moonlight, he saw, or though the saw, the big Snow Man rolling his head at him and calling him. "I'm lonesome," said the Snow Man. "If you don't come out, I'll come in. And I'll get into bed with you, too."

The Man Mite's sister crept out of her room and stood at his side. "Ooh!" she whimpered; "I just knew something would happen. I wish we hadn't made him a mouth."

"He says he'll come in if we don't go out," said the Man Mite.

“Let him then!” answered his sister. The Man Mite knew that would never do, so they dressed as quickly as they could and ran out into the yard. “Wh-wh-wh-what shall we play?” asked the Man Mite, with his teeth chattering.

“Snow-balling,” said the Snow Man. “It’s the only game I know.” And he picked up a huge lump of snow and almost smothered the Man Mite with it.

The Man Mite took his sister’s hand and ran to the other side of the yard, and packing a hard ball, he threw it with all his force, hitting the Snow Man squarely on his red nose.

“Wow!” roared the Snow Man, and then began a snow ball battle worth seeing. Only, nobody was awake to see it.

The Snow Man threw much the larger balls, but, on the other hand, he made much the larger target. Unfortunately for the Man

Mite, every time the Snow Man was hit, the snow stuck to him, so that he kept growing bigger and bigger all the time, and every time he stepped (or rolled rather, for as his legs were all in one piece, he rolled instead of walked) he grew taller and taller. The larger and taller he grew, the harder he threw, so that some of his snow balls made the Man Mite smart pretty badly, but if ever he showed any sign of stopping, the big Snow Man said: "You made me and you've got to play with me. I'm lonesome." Then he threw and hit the Man Mite's sister, which made her cry and made the little boy very angry.

By this time nearly all the snow in the yard was used up, and the Snow Man had become so large the Man Mite was afraid the huge body would fall on them and bury them.

Just then the Snow Man threw a par-

ticularly large and well made snow ball, which struck the loose part of the Man Mite's overcoat and fell to the ground unbroken. The Man Mite had a fine, round ball in his hands, ready to throw, but instead of throwing it, he stuck it on one end of the large ball the Snow Man had thrown. Then he took his muffler and wrapped around it, crying: "Oh, Snow Man, Snow Man! I've found your little baby and now you won't be lonesome any more."



The Snow Man's black eyes glittered, his red nose glistened and his pecan teeth grinned more than ever. He grabbed the baby and rocked it with joy, rolling all over the yard, while the Man Mite and his sister ran into the house, kicked off their clothes and jumped into their beds. For some time the little boy thought he could hear a sound like the wind blowing

down the chimney. Presently he made out that it was the Snow Man singing:

Little Snow Baby, your toesy are frozy,
Boo, boo, boo;
So is your dear little, queer little nosey,
Too, too, too.
Papa's a Snow Man and soon he must go;
Mama's not made, so she never will know
Why papa loves little Snow Baby so,
You, you, you.

But he was so sleepy he owns that he isn't quite sure but it might have been the wind, as he at first thought.

When he woke up the next morning, he ran to the window the first thing. It was raining. The snow was all gone from the back yard, as he knew it would be. Stranger than that, the Snow Man and the Snow Baby had run away together.

But the strangest thing of all was that when the Man Mite asked his sister about the snow ball fight, he found she had no recollection of having been up during the night at all!

SANTA CLAUS ON A STRIKE.



HE Man Mite had been so much excited over the coming of Christmas that he had quite forgotten to reckon time by the usual method. Instead of Thursday, Friday and Saturday it was "'leven days 'fore Crismus, ten days 'fore Crismus, nine days 'fore Crismus," and so on. At last he was able to say: "Papa, after to-morrow it'll be *no* days 'fore Crismus, won't it? An' I got the toothache, papa, awful bad."

"Ho, ho!" said his father. "Now I know what to get you for Christmas."

"What?" queried the Man Mite. "Put on your hat and coat and come along, and I'll show you," answered his father. The Man Mite was used to his father's sudden ways, so he went with him without further questioning. When



they got down town he cried out: "Oh, papa, the stores are all closed up!"

"Yes," said his father.

"*Why* are they all closed up?" persisted the Man Mite.

"Probably Santa Claus is on a strike," said his father.

"Oh, papa!" gasped the Man Mite, in dismay.

Just then they turned into the hallway of a big building. It was very quiet, and only one of the dozen elevators was running. The Man Mite remembered the place, and recalled how very busy it usually was. "It must be on account of Santa Claus," he thought, mournfully.

His father glanced from the elevator-man to the Man Mite, and said, gravely: "Is old Mr. Santa Claus up in 807?"

The elevator-man didn't glance at the

father in answering, but looked straight at the Man Mite, and said, slowly: "Why, I think his hired man is up there."

"Papa," said the Man Mite, as soon as they were out of the elevator, "that man was a-fooling you. He didn't *da*st look at you, and he laughed at me with his eyes."

"Dear me!" exclaimed his father. "Who would have thought it? Then we needn't look to see if Santa Claus is in, need we?"

"Oh, yes," said the Man Mite, hastily; "I think you'd better *look*, anyway."

So they opened the door of 807. When they stepped on the door-mat a bell rang in another room, and out came an old gentleman with a gray beard and a pleasant face.

"He *does* look like Santa Claus," thought the Man Mite; "only his cheeks

aren't red enough, and his clothes are too much like papa's. It must be the hired man."

"Good-morning," said his father. "Here's a little boy who wants a tooth pulled for a Christmas present."

The Man Mite thought that was a strange sort of a Christmas present! but he was used to his father's funny ways, so he said nothing.

"Wouldn't he like a ride in my new deerless sleigh first?" asked the pleasant old man as he lifted the Man Mite into a big red seat which moved up and down and whirled around in a perfectly unaccountable way. "Let me look at your teeth, to see how old you are," he said. Then he turned, and the Man Mite heard him say something about gas and treating something.

The Man Mite was so busy puzzling

over the various events of the morning that he didn't notice anything more till something was placed over his mouth, and the hired man told him to breathe so he could get used to the rarefied air that the deerless sleigh traveled through.

The Man Mite gave a startled glance at his father, who smiled and nodded at him. The next thing he knew up went the deerless sleigh right through the roof, and the Man Mite never so much as bumped his head. It must have been a very swift journey. The Man Mite just caught a glimpse of cities full of closed stores; of little girls crying and little boys standing around gloomily with their hands in their pockets; of fathers with their heads in their hands and sighing mothers taking down empty stockings from chimney-corners.

86 Told to the Little Tot

Santa Claus was on a strike! Santa Claus was on a strike!

Presently the sleigh stopped and the Man Mite stared in astonishment. He was before a beautiful shining building, something like an ice palace. The Man Mite looked again, and on the door he saw a plate, and on the plate was a name made out of splinters of the aurora borealis. There it was as plain as day, or even plainer.

S. Claus.

The Man Mite was just about to ring the bell, when he thought he would look around the premises first. It was a wonderful place! The snow was three feet deep in the front yard, and so hard you could walk on the crust easily, yet the roses and sunflowers grew right up through it; and there was a crab-apple tree in the



back yard with candied crab-apples on it. You know how good *they* are.

Perhaps stranger than that was the cocoanut tree, with a climbing monkey in the top branches, who threw a big cocoanut down to the Man Mite.

And what should he find on the inside of it but an ice-cream soda!

The Man Mite ate it at once, you may be sure, and then went to visit the stables. As these were no longer needed for the reindeer they were occupied by a beautiful menagerie. In the middle was a three-ring circus, only there was no performance. "It must be on a strike, too," thought the Man Mite.

He went back to the house, and as he passed the kitchen he peeped in, and there

sat Santa Claus — the *real* Santa Claus. There was no mistaking him. He was dressed in the fur suit the Man Mite knew so well, and was seated on a bench by the fire. His apron was hung upon the wall, and his hammers and saws and glue-pots were piled upon a shelf. He held a pipe between his teeth, but it had gone out, and on his face was an unmistakable scowl. Before him lay a big red book with gilt on the cover and edges.

The Man Mite could spell out the name on the cover of the book quite easily:

E—T—I—Q—U—E—T—T—E.

He didn't know what it meant, but he felt sure it must be a very unpleasant book, indeed.

Suddenly Santa Claus threw his pipe on the hearth and dumped the book on the floor. He spread his feet before the fire



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Santa Claus on a Strike



ten million boys and girls in the United States alone every year and not one of them calls on me. Why, if I were a giant or an ogre they couldn't treat me worse. Not one!" he repeated, bitterly. "If there were only *one* who showed that he cared a sour apple for old Santa, aside from the things I bring him, maybe I'd relent, but—"

As soon as the Man Mite heard this much, he ran around to the front door and rang the bell as hard as he could.

"Who's there?" cried a gruff voice within, but which was unmistakably Santa's.

"It's me," said the Man Mite. "Is Santa Claus there?"

"Maybe he is," said the voice, as the door opened a crack. "What do you want?"

"Want to see Santa, of course," an-

swered the Man Mite. "I've come all the way from the middle of the United States to see him."

"You don't say!" exclaimed the voice, as the door swung open.

"Oh, it's you, it's you!" cried the Man Mite, and jumped right into Santa Claus's arms.

"Bless my soul!" said Santa Claus, "but you seem glad to see a fellow!"

"Glad!" exclaimed the Man Mite. "Do you suppose there's a boy or girl in all the world who wouldn't be the very gladdest boy or girl in all the world if he could be me this minute?"

"Is that so?" said Santa Claus, greatly mollified.

"Oh, yes; they'd be just as glad about it as they are sorry about some other things."

"About *what*?" asked Santa Claus.

“ Oh, about steam-heaters and gas-grates and such things. But, oh, Santa, as I came along I heard folks say there was going to be a strike. I don’t care so much about myself, Santa, because I’m going to have my tooth pulled for a Christmas gift,” he said, proudly; “ but there’s little lame Dick in our street, Santa, he’s *got* to have a pair of crutches, and he *ought* to have a tricycle, one he could work with his hands, you know. And the old coal-horse that lives in the alley, he ought to have a blanket this cold weather. And I know Blanche will be awfully disappointed if she doesn’t get a doll that can cry, and Freddie has wanted a ‘Life of George Washington’ ever since last Fourth of July, and—”

“ Life of George who ? ” cried Santa, testily.

“ Of George Washington, Santa,” answered the Man Mite, talking very rapidly

so Santa wouldn't interrupt him. "You know, Santa, all of us little United States boys like George Washington, and all of the little boys of England like King Alfred, and all of the little boys of France and Germany they like—well, I don't know just who, but somebody else, I guess. But, Santa, *all* the boys and girls of *all* the countries like *you*, so you see you are liked most of all."

"Bless my soul!" cried Santa, blowing his nose very hard. "I'm an old brute, that's what I am! And you're a nice little boy, that's what you are!" Santa began feeling in all his pockets, saying, meanwhile: "Jump into my sleigh and I'll let you ride with me."

The Man Mite did so, and Santa Claus felt in his outside pocket and his inside pocket, in his upside pocket and his down side pocket, in his inside, skininside, topside

pocket and his outside, furside, frontside pocket. At last he pulled out a shining silver dollar. "There!" he said, with a great puff, "I thought I'd find the United States pocket if I kept on long enough! You see, I have to carry the coins of all nations and I put each in a different pocket, and I get them mixed up sometimes," he explained.

He reached over and pressed the silver dollar into the Man Mite's hand, and in doing so he must have touched the lever or something, for the sleigh jumped into the air like a live thing. It circled around and around, higher and higher, like a homing-pigeon, and then suddenly shot for somewhere as straight as an arrow, and almost before the Man Mite could think, down it plumped through a roof right into room 807.

The Man Mite stared around, and there was his father, and also the pleasant-faced hired man.

“Why,” said the Man Mite, “I must have got into your sleigh instead of Santa’s, after all!”

“Have you been dreaming, Man Mite?” laughed his father.

“No, I wasn’t dreaming,” said the Man Mite, soberly, “’cause here’s the dollar Santa gave me. Oo! What’s this in my other hand? Why, it’s my *tooth*!

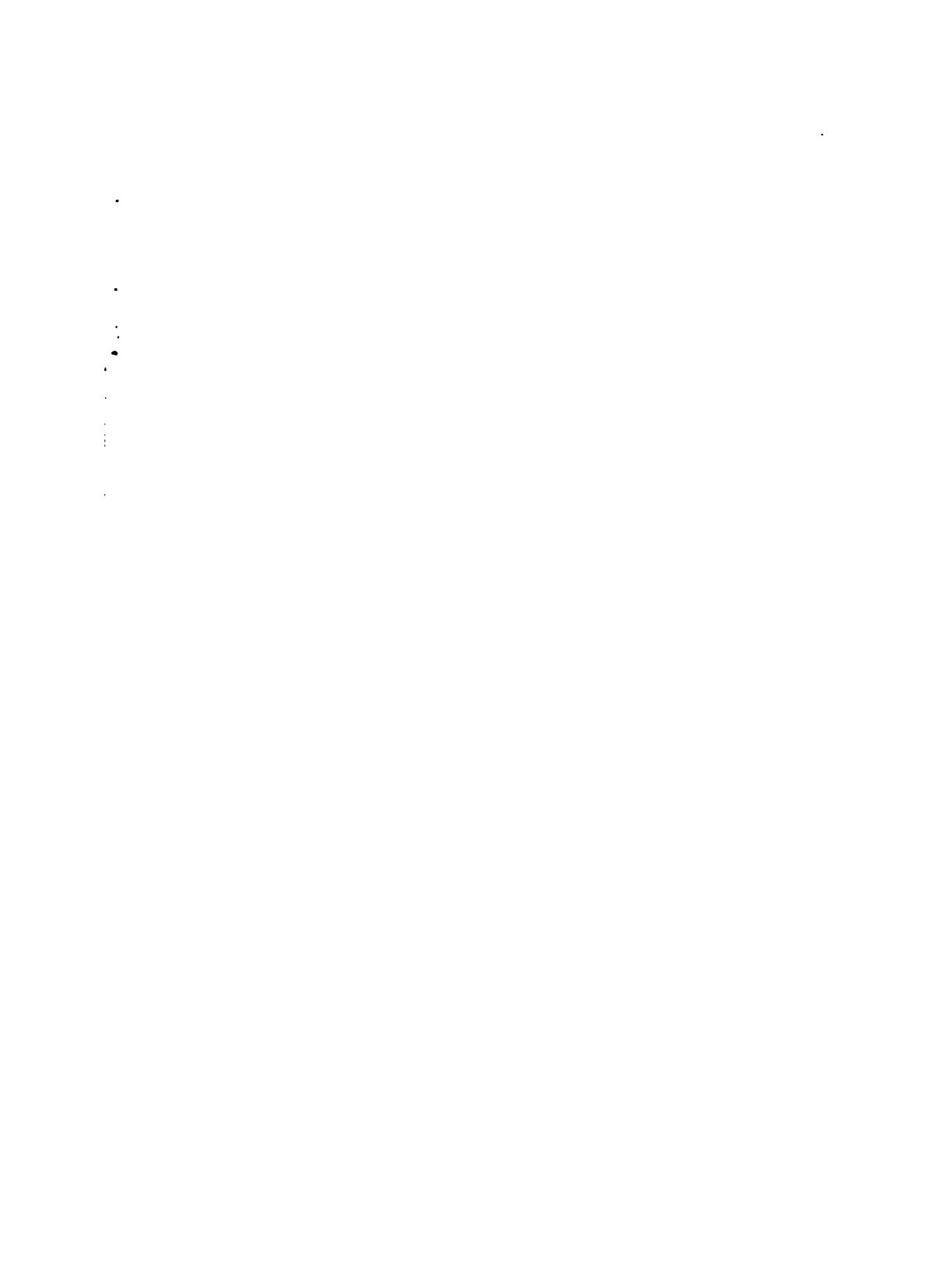
“It makes you light-headed to ride in the deerless sleigh, papa,” said the Man Mite as they went down in the elevator; “but it goes much faster than this,” he added, in a tone of superiority.

When they reached the street again he looked around eagerly and said: “Papa,

Santa isn't on a strike any more, but the stores are closed just the same. I wonder why."

"Maybe it's because it's Sunday," answered his father.

And sure enough, maybe it was.



GOING TO MEET CHRISTMAS.



APA," said the Man Mite,
"can you hear Christ-
mas?"

"Can you hear Christ-
mas?" repeated his papa.

"Why, I suppose so, in
a sort of way. You can hear bells chim-
ing and little boys drumming and little girls
blowing horns and people laughing and
everybody saying 'Merry Christmas!' I
suppose that's hearing Christmas, isn't it?"

"But I mean can you hear it before
it's here?" asked the Man Mite.

"No, I think not," answered papa.

"Well, if you can't hear it, how can
you tell it's coming? Can you see it
coming?"

"Oh," answered his papa, "I see what
you mean now. Well, how can you tell to-
morrow is coming? Can you smell it?"



The Man Mite laughed. "Such a silly papa! To-morrow *has* to come so that to-day can be yesterday. You 'splained that to me once yourself."

"Yes? Well, Christmas has to come so that next Christmas can be last Christmas."

"Oh, papa," cried the Man Mite, "you forgot about *this* Christmas, but please don't tell me when *this* Christmas is coming, because I want it to surprise me. I want it to sneak right up and get here when I don't know it."

"All right," laughed papa, "I shan't tell, and you can go to bed every night *for a week* hoping that the next day will be Christmas."

Which is exactly what the Man Mite did, and for a night or two it was very exciting, but towards the end of the week he began to grow tired of it. It was all very well to go to bed hoping that the

next day would be Christmas, but to wake up every morning and ask "Where is Christmas?" only to be answered with "Christmas is coming!" was very disappointing.

One night his papa and mama insisted that he go to bed earlier than usual, so he was very wide awake for a while, and lay there wondering how he could hurry up Christmas. He closed his eyes and tried to imagine how Christmas looked dilly-dallying along the way, as (he remembered with shame) he himself did sometimes when he was sent upon an errand, instead of hastening, as Christmas and a little boy ought to.

"Christmas is coming! Christmas is coming!" he repeated to himself, "and if it doesn't hurry and hurry up—if it doesn't hurry and hurry up, I'll go to meet it!"

That was a new idea, and the Man Mite

lingered on it lovingly. "Go to meet it!"
Why not?

Just how he got himself dressed and out of the house he never distinctly remembered. He afterwards said that he was in such a hurry he didn't have time to remember, but that doesn't sound quite reasonable, does it?

He also says, however, that he remembers running for a long time as fast as he could go. When he stopped to take breath and to look around he found he was in a strange part of the city and there was nobody in the street in any direction. He was lost!

The Man Mite remembered that his papa told him that if ever he was lost he should ask a policeman, but there wasn't a policeman or anybody else in sight. On the corner, though, was a patrol-box and the Man Mite had seen the policeman telephone to the station from the box, so he thought he

would do the same thing. As he was trying to open the door, he was startled to hear a voice inside exclaim, "Christmas is coming!"

"Which way is it coming, please?" asked the Man Mite, and off popped the top and up popped a Jack-in-the-box with his arms extended.

"Thank you," said the Man Mite, and hastened away in the direction the Jack-in-the-box had pointed. Presently he saw a toy trolley-car going in the same direction. "Hullo!" he said, "where is that car going?"

"Going to meet Christmas," answered the trolley-car; "get inside."

"Thank you," answered the Man Mite, "you're most too small for me to get inside of, but I can sit on top."

He did so, and the car took him to the end of the line, and he was his own con-

ductor and collected his own fare from himself. When the car stopped, it was at the end of a street which ran up against a steep bluff with no elevator or path to help a little boy to get to its top. The Man Mite wondered how he was ever going to get past that bluff, when he saw a climbing-monkey-on-a-string. One end of his string was attached to the top of the bluff and the other was fastened to the ground below. "Hello," said the monkey, "Christmas is coming, and if you want to go to meet it, you would better crawl up my string. I'll show you how."

"Oh, I can't," said the Man Mite. "Can't!" mocked the monkey. "I'm only a tin monkey and I can do it. It's easy."

He went up the string hand-over-hand and foot-over-foot, and the Man Mite fol-



lowed. Much to his surprise, he reached the top without any difficulty, and there he found a toy train of cars, a toy automobile and a wooden wagon.

“All aboard for the Christmas Limited!” said the little iron brakeman.

“Automobile Air-Line to Santaclausville!” said the tin chauffeur.

“Fast express going to meet Christmas!” cried the tongue of the wagon, and the Man Mite noticed that the wagon *did* have “Express” printed on both its sides.

Now, although the Man Mite would have liked to go on the train or the auto, there was so much more room in the wooden wagon that he got into it, and was surprised that it soon left its companions far behind.

It sped along merrily, and its tongue kept up a continuous running talk as well, until it came to the ocean, where a toy boat was floating.

“All aboard for Christmas!” said the captain.

“But your boat is too small, and besides, there’s not a board in it; it’s tin,” answered the Man Mite.

“Well, throw us a line and we’ll tow you,” said the captain.

As the Man Mite had no line, he let him take the tongue of the wagon, and the captain stood at the stern of the boat and hung on.

Though the boat was so small, it pulled the Man Mite through the water in a surprising manner, and the wooden wagon floated and kept the Man Mite dry, but not a word could he get out of it, which was quite a contrast to its manner when on land.

The weather kept getting colder and colder, and presently the boat was stuck fast in the ice. Of course the wagon was also

frozen tight, and the captain let go of the "line," as he called it.

"There!" cried the wagon angrily. "I knew what you'd bring us into."

"Well, why didn't you say so, if you knew so much?" said the captain.

"Say so! Could *you* say so if somebody was pulling you along by the tongue?" demanded the wagon.

The captain replied and the wagon retorted, and the quarrel was becoming very unpleasant, when along came a pair of skates without anybody on them.

"Boat ahoy! wagon ahoy! boy ahoy!" cried the skates. "Christmas is coming."

"Take me along to meet it, please?" asked the Man Mite, and in another mo-



ment he was on the skates and skating faster and easier than he had ever skated in his life before. He skated for a long time, and passed fields where plum-puddings were growing like pumpkins, trees where candy-bags hung like pears, and snow-drifts which upon closer acquaintance proved to be huge frosted cakes. Curiously enough, fields and trees and drifts were all moving and cried out, "We're going to meet Christmas!"

After what seemed to him a long time, much to his surprise and joy he met a boy, seemingly of about his own age. The Man Mite was almost sure he had seen his face before, and yet, when he came to look at him again, he was surer still that he hadn't, for certainly he had never seen a boy with a fur cap, fur coat, fur boots and fur trousers! He noticed, too, that while the boy's face was round and chubby, his hair was white;

not merely tow-headed, like Willie Perkin's and Pete Judson's but pure white.

"Hello!" said the stranger. "What's your name?"

"They call me Man Mite. What's yours?"

"Santy."

"Santy? What a funny name! Santy what?"

"Santy Claus."

"Santy Claus!" cried the Man Mite. "You can't be Santy Claus. He's a man and you're just a little boy like I am."

"Ho! you're thinkin' of my father," answered the boy.

"Your father!" cried the Man Mite, more astonished than ever. Somehow, he had never thought of the possibility of Santy Claus being a father.

"Have you got a mother, too?" he asked, after a moment.

“Yep. Had one ever since I was born. Ain’t you?”

“*Of course,*” answered the Man Mite, “but I never heard of Mrs. Santy Claus.”

“Never heard of your mother neither,” answered Santy, Jr.

“Say, now, ain’t you fooling me? Are you honestly Santy Claus’s little boy?”

“Say yourself,” answered the other, “doesn’t your father remember when he was little he had a Santy Claus?”

“Yes.”

“Didn’t your father’s father have a Santy Claus?”

“I s’pose so.”

“Well, do you suppose it’s the same Santy Claus? Somebody’s got to keep the business goin’.”

“And will you be Santy Claus—the real Santy Claus—when you grow up?” asked the Man Mite.

“Oh, I s’pose so,” answered the other, carelessly.

“You s’pose so! Don’t you *want* to be?”

“Naw; I want to be the conductor on a dog train. Say, they made the run this year in three months and two days. Wasn’t that flyin’?”

It really didn’t seem very fast to the Man Mite, so he said: “How far is it?”

“From Arctic C. to Aurora B.?”

“What do you mean by Arctic C. and Aurora B.?”

“Arctic Circle to Aurora Borealis, of course. That run was an excursion, too. We always go to the Aurora B. for the Fourth. Fine fire-works there.”

“The Fourth? Do you celebrate the Fourth?”

“O’ course.”

“But you’re not Americans, are you?”

"No; that's the worst of it. We got to celebrate everything, holidays and saints' days and kings' and queens' birthdays and the whole bunch. That's because we belong to all nations."

"Christmas is the best, isn't it?" smiled the Man Mite.

"Worst o' the lot," said Santy, Jr., shortly.

"Why, what makes you think so?" cried the Man Mite.

"'Cause dad's always away on Christmas and we've cleared everything out of the house to the last ginger-snap to put in folks' stockings and it's the middle of the night and everybody's tired, just like I am now, and wants to go to bed."

"Middle of the night? What *do* you mean?"

"Middle of the north pole night. If it wasn't for Christmas we could go to bed

about half-past October and sleep till a quarter of May, but ma thinks we ought to help pa and then wait up till he comes home. My, but I'm sleepy! Ain't you?"

"Yes," owned the Man Mite, "a little."

"Well, come on and sleep with me. Your mother won't mind. You can get up about a quarter past April and get home early."

While they were speaking, Santy, Jr., was leading the way into the house and to his room. The two boys lay down together on a bed of bear-skins, and the Man Mite said, sleepily: "Say, will you please tell me something?"

"Uh huh," said Santy.

"What makes your hair white?"

"What makes a polar bear's hair white? What makes an arctic fox's hair white? What makes an arctic hare's hair white? Why, hello! there's dad coming back!"

"Coming back from where?"

"Why, from Christmas, of course. You do ask the funniest questions. I believe you're asleep. Your eyes are shut and you talk so stupid."

The Man Mite rubbed his eyes with both hands and strove to open them. Then he heard a voice cry "Papa! papa!" but instead of its being the voice of Santy, Jr., as he expected, it was the voice of his



brother Ben. Then somebody kissed him and called "Merry Christmas!"

"Oh, papa," said the Man Mite as he opened his eyes, "is it *this* Christmas or *next* Christmas?"

He did not stop for an answer to his question. With a shout of joy he sprang out of bed and darted upon a pair of skates, a toy steam-boat, a wooden wagon marked "E-x-p-r-e-s-s" on both sides and a toy trolley-car which was big enough for him to sit upon the roof.



HOW THE MAN MITE SAVED CHRISTMAS.



ELL," said papa, earnestly, as he looked up from the Christmas eve edition of his favorite daily, "I believe Peary is right, and that the time has come to discover the north pole."

"What for?" asked the Man Mite, that being a favorite question of his.

"In the interests of science," answered his father, forgetting for the moment that he was not speaking to a grown-up.

"What science?" asked the Man Mite.

Sure enough, what science? When he came to think of it, papa really didn't know and he wouldn't have been able to make the Man Mite know, even if he *had* known. So papa hesitated a moment and then said:

"Why, Santaclausology, of course."

118 Told to the Little Tot

“San-ta-claus-ol-ogy!” stammered the Man Mite.

“Yes, the science of Santa Claus. Santa Claus lives at the north pole, doesn’t he? How are we ever going to find out anything about him unless we track him to his lair, so to speak?”

“But, papa,” objected the Man Mite, “we oughtn’t to find him out if he doesn’t want us to, ought we? You know you’ve always told me not to keep awake on Christmas eve, ’cause it might hurt Santa’s feelings if he thought I was spying on him.”

“Um—ah—yes, but suppose we could do him some good by finding him out, what then?” asked papa.

“Why, papa,” answered the Man Mite, “people can’t do good to Santa Claus. Santa Claus does good to *them*.”

I’m not so sure about not being able

to do Santa any good," responded papa, wisely. "Santa Claus isn't so young as he used to be. Suppose that a polar bear should besiege Santa in his house and keep him from starting out on his journey to-night, what could he do?"

"Why—why—then there wouldn't be any Christmas to-morrow," said the Man Mite in an awed whisper.

"But if we had discovered the north pole and had made it into a telegraph or telephone pole, Santa Claus could call us up and let us know what was the trouble."

This seemed unanswerable, and the Man Mite pondered a long time over it. At last he looked up and said: "Papa, please may I go to bed now?"

His papa had to take off his glasses, rub them carefully, put them on again and look the Man Mite all over before he was sure he had understood.

The Man Mite asking to go to bed! "Mother," called his papa in alarm, "do you think we'd better have the doctor? He says he wants to go to bed."

"Oh," said his mama, after a moment, "I suspect he just wants to go to sleep early, so as to give Santa Claus a clear field and then wake up early in the morning."

The Man Mite went to bed and kept very quiet, so that Santa Claus would think he was asleep and would not be frightened away, for neither his papa nor his mama was right. He was not sick and he had no intention of going to sleep. On the contrary, he had resolved to stay awake and ask Santa please to let some one discover the north pole, so he could put in a telephone, and then little boys and girls could call him up and let him know just what they wanted for Christmas.

He waited and waited, turning over and over in his mind just what he would say to Santa Claus and just what Santa Claus would say to him. Why didn't Santa Claus come? The Man Mite had heard the clock down stairs strike eight, the half hour, nine and the half hour again, and still Santa Claus did not appear.

His mouth opened widely several times and his eyes seemed to want to close very badly. "I suppose," thought the Man Mite, "that when my mouth opens so wide, my eyes have to close to give the skin of my face a chance to stretch."

Then the Man Mite had a very horrifying thought. "What if Santa Claus were really besieged by a polar bear, as his papa had suggested, and couldn't come? *Why* did nobody know the way to Santa Claus's house? If it were at the north pole, it must be straight to the north. One had



only to go far enough to find it. How strange nobody had ever thought of that before! He wished he could tell some Arctic explorer, but as he did not know where any of them lived, he supposed he would have to find the north pole himself.

With the Man Mite, to think was to act. Out of bed he rolled and slipped into his clothes. Last of all, he put on his over-coat and fur cap and rubber-boots. As he passed through the pantry he filled an over-coat pocket full of Christmas cookies. Once the thought occurred to him that if the polar bear had not interfered with Santa, he was surely due at the house now, and this journey might miss him altogether. But the Man Mite resolved to keep straight to the north and then he would surely meet him coming, if all were well.

The Man Mite never had a very dis-

tinct recollection of the journey, but he recalled slipping out of the house and turning his face towards the north. He knew the direction very well, as his papa had often pointed it out to him. *Why* hadn't the explorers' papas pointed it out to *them*? He remembered, too, that it was very much further than he thought it would be. Several times he grew so tired he had to stop and eat a cookie to regain his strength.

It grew colder and colder, but the Man Mite struggled on. At last he came to a river, or an ocean, or something. Anyway, it was water and it had ice floating in it, just like when his papa took him to the theater to see "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The poor Man Mite stopped in dismay. How could he ever get past that water? It was very dark and deep looking and the ice in it floated rapidly. Presently the Man Mite noticed something.

The ice was floating towards the north.

Then he was seized with a great idea. He pulled his cap close over his ears, tucked his trousers into his rubber-boots more snugly and swung his arms and stamped his feet to get his blood warm. He also ate another cookie. Then he made a flying leap straight for the largest ice block and was whirled rapidly away to the north.

It was a perilous adventure, and the Man Mite was mortally afraid he would get his feet wet, despite his rubber-boots, and then he would catch cold and his mama might scold him for going out after dark.

He had eaten his last cookie, when bump! his ice block had hit against something and stopped. It was a small island, in the middle of which was an enormous pole, as large around as two trees. On

the top of the pole was a plump, dumpy little man dressed all in fur, who shouted earnestly: "To the house! quick! run into the house!"

The Man Mite looked around and saw a wonderful house made all of ice, glistening in the moonlight. He ran into it as fast as his numb little legs would go, slammed the door shut and then peeped out through the window.

Around the base of the big pole came an enormous white bear, snuffing and growling horribly!

It was true, then! Santa Claus was treed on top of the north pole by a bear! Dear, dear, what should he do? The Man Mite felt almost like crying, and—why, what was that? Somebody *was* crying. Looking around he perceived the sound came from the crying dolls, seven hundred thousand of them.

“What are you crying about?” demanded the Man Mite, fiercely. “Don’t you know this is no time for crying? We’ve got to rescue Santa Claus.”

“To the rescue of Santa Claus!” shouted eleven hundred thousand jumping-jacks, who were packed on a shelf nearby.

“Jumping-jacks, attention!” cried the Man Mite. “Forward—double quick—charge!”

He opened the door and the devoted jumping-jacks rushed out and hurled themselves at the polar bear. But alas! the whole eleven hundred thousand of them could not disconcert the monster, who crushed them with a stroke or two of his gigantic paws. A few of them escaped and came jumping back through the window.

“Give the other jacks a chance!” cried a chorus from somewhere, although it seemed a smothered chorus.

“What other jacks?” asked the Man Mite.

“The jacks-in-the-boxes—seventeen hundred thousand of us—but our lids are down.”

“So much the better,” said the Man Mite. “Now, when I open the door, you roll out, and every one of you try to hit him in the eye with a corner of your box—in the eye, remember.”

The polar bear didn’t mind the first few dozen hitting him much more than if they had been flies, but when they came by scores and hundreds and thousands, he began to fight desperately. But every time he struck a hundred or so of them the lids flew open and out popped a hundred jacks, much to the polar bear’s surprise. And every time he opened his eyes in surprise, a hundred more boxes would strike him, and always with the corners. In a

short time his eyes were so bruised and swollen he couldn't open them at all.

The jacks-in-the-boxes came bumping back to the house in high glee, and were cheered heartily. The wax dolls formed themselves into a corps of Red Cross nurses to care for the wounded.

At this point the Man Mite heard a mutinous complaining. "Nice sort of a commander he is, getting all the toys broken and only blacking the enemy's eyes. Why doesn't he send us soldiers to do the fighting?"

"Tin soldiers, attention!" cried the Man Mite. "Form in platoons and charge!"

He held the door open and the soldiers marched out, with great precision, it is true,



but so stiffly and slowly that the bear merely waited until they were all out and then hurled great lumps of snow at them and buried them before



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How the Man Mite Saved Christmas

